

SOCIALISTIC LABOR PARTY.

Proceedings of the National Convention held at Allegheny City, Pa., Dec. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 1879, and Jan. 1, 1880.

Submitted to the Sections for Ratification.

Information.—Each section receives two copies of this circular, one of which will be returned to the National Executive Committee, with the exact number of votes cast for and against each article, title, word or sentence in the circular, marked upon the margin at the side of such sentence, word, etc. The other circular will be kept by the section and will be an exact duplicate of the one sent to the National Executive Committee. The reports must be returned to the National Executive Committee, at Detroit, on or before March 10th, 1880.

The party will then be informed by circular as to the exact result of the vote.

Return this sheet when acted upon, to

PHILIP VAN PATTEN,
P. O. Box 597, Detroit, Mich.

PLATFORM OF THE

SOCIALISTIC LABOR PARTY.

Labor being the creator of all wealth, through and by it alone is organized society and civilization possible. It rightfully follows that those who labor and create all wealth are the most important part of society, and hence should enjoy the full results of their toil; and we

Declare that a just and equitable distribution of the fruits of labor is utterly impossible under the present system of society. This fact is abundantly illustrated by the deplorable condition of the working classes, who are in a state of destitution and degrading dependence in the midst of their own productions. While the hardest and most disagreeable work brings to the worker only the bare necessities of life, others, who labor not at all, riot in labor's production and everything that wealth can purchase; and we

Declare that the present industrial system of competition causes and intensifies this inequality, concentrating into the hands of a few all means of production, distribution and the results of labor, thus creating gigantic monopolies dangerous to the people's liberties; and we further

Declare that these monster monopolies and these extremes of rich and poor are the natural outgrowths of the industrial system, supported by class legislation, and are subversive of all democracy; injurious to the national interests and destructive of all truth and morality. This state of affairs, continued and upheld by the now ruling political parties, is against the welfare of the people, and as the emancipation of the working classes must be achieved by the working classes themselves, it now becomes their duty to unite as a powerful labor party to free themselves from all forms of tyranny and an unjust system.

For these reasons the Socialistic Labor Party has been founded, and in order to ameliorate the condition of the working people under the present system, we present the following platform and demands:

The material condition of the working people in all civilized countries is identical and results from the same causes, consequently the struggle for the emancipation of labor is international and naturally cooperative and mutual.

The wages system has become destructive to the highest interests of mankind, and to abolish this system, with a view to establish cooperative production and to secure equitable distribution we demand that the resources of life, the means of production, public transportation and exchange, become as far as practicable, the public property of the people under administration of the government.

DEMANDS.

First. Entire revision of the United States Constitution so as to institute direct popular legislation, and enable the people to propose or reject any law at their will, and thus secure self-government.

Second. The right of suffrage shall in no wise be abridged.

Third. Political equality before the law, of all citizens,

Eighth. All wages shall be paid in the legal tender of the land, and violations of this law must be punished.

Ninth. All ballots to be printed by town and city governments. Ballots containing the names of all candidates for public office to be sent to all voters two days before each election, and all election days to be legal holidays.

Tenth. All property, whether used for religious or secular purposes, to bear its just proportion of taxation.

RESOLUTIONS.

1st Resolved, We favor the organization of national and international trade and labor unions for the protection of workingmen, and advise our members to assist and join them, and that in resisting aggressive capital we give to labor, exploited under whatever form, our full sympathy, and, according to our means, our material support.

2nd Resolved, All so-called tramp laws punishing unemployed workingmen as tramps are unconstitutional and inhuman, as poverty is thereby made a crime, therefore we demand their repeal.

WHEREAS, Twenty-two different railroad corporations have failed to comply with the conditions under which they have received land grants aggregating over 125,000,000 acres, comprising an area of territory larger than nearly a dozen States, and

WHEREAS, Millions of the citizens of the United States are struggling for a bare existence, unable to procure homes and a competence, and

WHEREAS, Said railroad land grants would furnish farms of fifty acres to over five millions of our citizens, therefore be it

RESOLVED, We call upon the Representatives of the people in the Congress of the United States to revoke the charters of these railroad corporations and reclaim the land granted under them for the exclusive use, benefit and occupancy of the people.

WHEREAS, The so-called Democrats (landlords) of the South have joined hands with the so-called Republicans, (capitalists) of the North; and

WHEREAS, This combination of the wealthy men, both North and South, is made for the sole purpose of destroying the liberties of the common people of both sections of our country; therefore, be it

Resolved, That we urge the working people of the South, regardless of color, to unite with their brothers of the North against the attempts of the ruling class to further impoverish and enslave them by depriving them of the possession and enjoyment of the fruits of their labor.

AMENDMENTS

TO THE

CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIALISTIC LABOR PARTY.

Now to be Voted upon by the Sections.

II. CONVENTIONS.

THE NATIONAL CONVENTION.

1st. The National Convention will assemble at least once every two years. Every section belonging to the party for three months prior to the National Convention, and which has fulfilled all its obligations, is entitled to representation therein by one delegate for each 100 members or fraction thereof. Each delegate shall have only one vote, and credentials shall not be transferable. *Proxy delegates must receive their credentials directly from the sections they represent.*

3d. Substitute the words *Party Secretary* for the words *Corresponding and Financial Secretaries.*

4th. A special National Convention may be called by ten sections of five different States.

6th. All propositions for the consideration of the National Convention must be communicated to the sections at least six weeks before the Convention assembles. (The above to be adopted, and the following stricken out): Propositions involving alteration or amendment to the Platform or Constitution, and which may have been found necessary at too late a date for publication to the party, will require for their adoption a two-thirds vote of the delegates present.

STATE CONVENTIONS.

1st. The State Conventions will assemble at a proper time before the State elections are held. Add words *if found practicable.*

4th. In all States where no State organization exists, the section which has the largest number of members shall, before the 1st of April, 1880, appoint a State Central Committee for the purpose of carrying out the regulations provided by the

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Declare that a just and equitable distribution of the fruits of labor is utterly impossible under the present system of society. This fact is abundantly illustrated by the deplorable condition of the working classes, who are in a state of destitution and degrading dependence in the midst of their own productions. While the hardest and most disagreeable work brings to the worker only the bare necessities of life, others, who labor not at all, riot in labor's production and everything that wealth can purchase; and we

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DEMANDS.

First. Entire revision of the United States Constitution so as to institute direct popular legislation, and enable the people to propose or reject any law at their will, and thus secure self-government.

Second. The right of suffrage shall in no wise be abridged.

Third. Political equality before the law, of all citizens, without regard to creed, race or sex.

Fourth. The establishment of a national ministry of labor.

Fifth. All conspiracy laws operating against the rights of workmen must be repealed.

Sixth. Congress shall provide for the immediate creation of a national bureau of labor statistics.

Seventh. The rigid enforcement of the eight hour law in all national public works. We also demand an amendment to the Constitution of the United States declaring eight hours as a legal work day in all industrial employments.

Eighth. All uncultivated lands shall be taxed equally with cultivated lands in the same locality.

Ninth. The government alone shall issue all money, and such right should not be delegated to any banking or private corporation.

The Socialistic Labor Party struggles to carry out the following measures in those States where they are not now the law:

First. State bureaux of labor statistics.

Second. Eight hours as a legal working day, and strict punishment of all violators.

Third. Abolition of the system of hiring out by contract, the labor of convicts in prisons and reformatory institutions.

Fourth. Strict laws making employers liable for all accidents resulting from their negligence, to the injury of their employees.

Fifth. Entire legal restriction of the labor of children under fourteen years of age.

Sixth. Universal compulsory education; all schooling material to be furnished at public expense.

Seventh. Factory, mine and workshop inspection, and sanitary supervision of all food and dwellings.

be it
RESOLVED, We call upon the Representatives of the people in the Congress of the United States to revoke the charters of these railroad corporations and reclaim the land granted under them for the exclusive use, benefit and occupancy of the people.

WHEREAS, The so-called Democrats (landlords) of the South have joined hands with the so-called Republicans, (capitalists) of the North; and

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3d. Substitute the words *Party Secretary* for the words *Corresponding and Financial Secretaries*.

4th. A special National Convention may be called by ten sections of *five different States*.

6th. All propositions for the consideration of the National Convention must be communicated to the sections at least six weeks before the Convention assembles. (The above to be *adopted*, and the following *stricken out*): Propositions involving alteration or amendment to the Platform or Constitution, and which may have been found necessary at too late a date for publication to the party, will require for their adoption a two-thirds vote of the delegates present.

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1st. The State Conventions will assemble at a proper time before the State elections are held. Add words *if found practicable*.

4th. In all States where no State organization exists, the section which has the largest number of members shall, before the 1st of April, 1880, appoint a State Central Committee to act in accordance with the regulations provided by the Constitution.

LOCAL CONVENTIONS.

1st. The local conventions assemble at a proper time before the city or county elections. Add the words "if found practicable to go into the elections."

III. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

1st. The National Executive Committee consists of seven members, including a Party Secretary, with the exception of whom, all will be elected by the sections in the locality chosen by the National Convention. (The office of financial secretary is thus consolidated with that of corresponding secretary.)

Par. 6. The National Executive Committee shall divide the Northern and Western States into four agitation districts as follows:

1st District—New England States and New York.
2d District—New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and West Virginia.

3d District—Ohio, Indiana, Northern Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan and Wisconsin.

4th District—Southern Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, Iowa, and Colorado.

Proper arrangements shall be made whereby the sections in these districts may act unitedly for systematic propaganda.

4th. Par. 6. Amended by substituting *Party Secretary* for *Corresponding Secretary*.

Par. c. Amended as follows: The Party Secretary shall carry on all correspondence, but special correspondence shall

be ordered by the National Executive Committee; he shall preserve a copy of the same, file all communications received, and keep a record of the same. He shall preserve all lists of membership, and keep an accurate account of all moneys received; he shall promptly deliver to the Treasurer all funds received by him, and take his receipt therefor. Upon request of any section, he shall furnish an accurate statement of its financial condition. He shall receive a proper salary.

Par. d. Substitute the words Party Secretary wherever the titles Corresponding or Financial Secretary were formerly used.

BOARD OF SUPERVISION

Following new paragraph added:

Par. e. The secretary of the Board of Supervision shall render a full report of the transactions of that Board during its term, to the National Convention.

IV. SECTIONS.

Par. c. The portion relating to trades unions to be stricken out, and placed among Resolutions.

2d. Amended as follows: "Only one section shall be established in each city or town. Branches shall be formed by the section wherever necessary. Each of these branches shall be designated numerically in the order of their organization in the town or city. These branches shall be permitted to transact business of a local character, but all matters of a general nature shall be settled by the Central Committee, in which all branches shall be proportionately represented.

3d. Sections and branches shall be the judges of their own members, and responsible for their actions. The jurisdiction of branches over their own members to be, however, subject to the approval of the Central Committee.

9th. After the word sections add "or branches."

12th. The following additions were made: "Subject to the approval of the Central Committee." Also to insert the word "branches" after sections.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

1st. In every city where two or more branches exist, all local business of the section, and dealings with the party authority will be carried on by a central committee.

2d. The central committee will be composed of delegates elected by the branches, the basis of representation determined by the branches collectively.

3d. The central committee shall have power to assess the local membership in a sum not exceeding two and one-half cents per member per month, for funds necessary for local purposes. This assessment to be deducted from the regular dues.

4th. The treasurer of each branch will report monthly to the central committee in writing, concerning the financial standing of his branch, and will pay to the Financial Secretary of the section the dues of each member (5 cents) five cents, to the National Executive Committee, and also, all dues and assessments belonging to the local central committee. All other money of the branch shall be held by its treasurer, subject to the order of the branch, which will be self-supporting, and conduct its own affairs, subject to the general regulations of the sections.

5th. Every delegate to the central committee will be subject to recall at any time, by the branch which he represents.

6th. All transactions of the central committee shall be subject to the approval of the branches, and will be promptly reported to them. If not objected to, they will be considered approved, but upon call of any branch, a general vote of all local branches shall be taken for the purpose of ratifying or rejecting any disputed action of the central committee.

7th. The section officers shall report to and receive their instructions from the central committee which represents the section. They shall attend all meetings of the central committee, and perform the duties specified in the Constitution. They are full members of the central committee.

8th. The central committee has full power to fill vacancies in section offices during the regular term, until a new election of officers takes place.

9th. The central committee shall elect from its midst an investigating committee of three, who shall investigate and decide upon all difficulties within the section, subject to the approval of the central committee or the section.

10th. Any motion or new business made in the central committee must be laid over until the next meeting, if one-third of the members present demand it.

11th. The central committee will meet as often as necessary, and the sessions shall be open to all party members

vote. When necessary, however, a general election may be called by the National Executive Committee, and any proposition in the interest of the party voted upon.

2d. No person shall be eligible as a candidate of this Party for any public office who has not been at least one year a member of the Party in good standing, and has identified himself with the movement by active participation. This rule may be suspended in cases of necessity, by the Board of Supervision and National Executive Committee, on application of any section.

3d. All Committees and Officers in the Party shall be elected by a majority vote.

4th. No member shall hold more than one office in the Section at the same time.

5th. All Officers, Boards or Committees in the party shall be subject to dismissal by a general vote of their constituents. Any member expelled from the Section shall have the right to appeal to the Central Committee where such exists, and from there to the Board of Supervision. No accusations or expulsions shall be published by any body other than the National Board of Supervision.

6th. All members shall be eligible to any office or position in the Party.

7th. All members acknowledging the Platform and Constitution take upon themselves the obligation to assist each other to the extent of their ability in case of need.

8th. All actions of the National, State and Local Conventions must be submitted to their constituents for ratification.

9th. Under no circumstances shall personal attacks against members be published in our Party organs, under penalty of expulsion from the Party of the member publishing or causing the same to be published.

SECTION REGULATIONS.

1st. Each Section elects from its midst an Organizer, Corresponding, Recording and Financial Secretaries, Treasurer and an Auditing Committee of two. Where no Central Committee exists, an Investigating Committee of three will also be elected.

4th. The Corresponding Secretary shall carry on the correspondence of the Section, preserve a copy of all communications issued, and an official report every month to the State Executive Committee, and where none such exists to the National Executive Committee. He shall place on file all communications received.

5th. The Recording Secretary shall keep the records of the business meetings, and as far as possible of the agitation meetings.

6th (formerly 5th). Strike out words "issue all cards of membership."

9th. The investigating committee shall consider and act upon all charges against members. Such charges shall not be debated upon before the committee has reported.

14th. Any party member who opposes and antagonizes the Demands, Measures and Resolutions of the party, in public meetings, shall be expelled from the party.

Important Actions of the National Convention Submitted for Ratification.

1st. The refusal to admit C. A. Light, delegate from the Indianapolis Section, to a seat in the Convention on the ground of having transferred the subscription list of a Socialistic paper edited by him, to the Democratic party, and of having continued to edit the same as a Democratic paper.

2d. The adoption of the committed report approving the rebuke given by the Chicago section to the National Executive Committee for having in June 1878, advised party members to withdraw from all military organizations which claim to be Socialistic in principle, and which thereby compromise our party in the eyes of the public.

3d. The adoption of the committee report approving the action of the National Executive Committee in declaring that our party had not and will not have any official connection with military organizations.

4th. The sanction given to the proposition to establish a Daily and Weekly paper in the English language, in New York City, under the control of the New York and Brooklyn sections, and for which they will be responsible. Said paper to be established on or before June 1st, 1880. Appointment of the chief editor to be subject to the approval of the National Executive Committee, publication, not to be commenced until the sum of \$6,000 has been secured. No other paper, started by any section or member, to receive party recognition until this one is established, provided it is started before June 1st, 1880.

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3d. The central committee shall have power to assess the local membership in a sum not exceeding two and one-half cents per member per month, for funds necessary for local purposes. This assessment to be deducted from the regular dues.

4th. The treasurer of each branch will report monthly to the central committee in writing, concerning the financial standing of his branch, and will pay to the Financial Secretary of the section the dues of each member (5 cents) five cents, to the National Executive Committee, and also, all dues and assessments belonging to the local central committee. All other money of the branch shall be held by its treasurer, subject to the order of the branch, which will be self-supporting, and conduct its own affairs, subject to the general regulations of the sections.

5th. Every delegate to the central committee will be subject to recall at any time, by the branch which he represents.

6th. All transactions of the central committee shall be subject to the approval of the branches, and will be promptly reported to them. If not objected to, they will be considered approved, but upon call of any branch, a general vote of all local branches shall be taken for the purpose of ratifying or rejecting any disputed action of the central committee.

7th. The section officers shall report to and receive their instructions from the central committee which represents the section. They shall attend all meetings of the central committee, and perform the duties specified in the Constitution. They are full members of the central committee.

8th. The central committee has full power to fill vacancies in section offices during the regular term, until a new election of officers takes place.

9th. The central committee shall elect from its midst an investigating committee of three, who shall investigate and decide upon all difficulties within the section, subject to the approval of the central committee or the section.

10th. Any motion or new business made in the central committee must be laid over until the next meeting, if one-third of the members present demand it.

11th. The central committee will meet as often as necessary, and the sessions shall be open to all party members who may desire to witness the proceedings.

12th. Upon dissolution of any branch, all of its property shall be delivered to the section officers.

13th. During political campaigns the Central Committee shall act as a Campaign Committee.

14th. The Section shall assemble semi-annually, January and July, for the purpose of electing their officers. In extraordinary cases, the branches may be called upon to assemble in joint meeting, as the main section.

15th. The Organizer shall have the right to appeal to the whole section in case of conflict with the Central Committee, but must execute their orders countermanded by a general vote of the section.

DUES.

1st. Where State Organization exists, the sections shall pay five cents per month for each member to the State Executive Committee, from which funds the State Executive Committee shall pay to the National Executive Committee the sum of two and one-half cents per month for each member.

2d. In case of need, the State or National Executive Committee shall have the right, with the approval of the Board of Supervision, to levy an extra tax on each member, of five cents (5 cents) per month, until such amount of money as is necessary has been raised.

GENERAL REGULATIONS.

1st. Amendments to or alterations of this constitution must be adopted by the National Convention, such action, however, to be submitted to the Party for ratification by a general vote. The result must be communicated to the National Executive Committee within four weeks from call for

ratification.
9th. Under no circumstances shall personal attacks against members be published in our Party organs, under penalty of expulsion from the Party of the member publishing or causing the same to be published.

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5th. The Recording Secretary shall keep the records of the business meetings, and as far as possible of the agitation meetings.

6th (formerly 5th). Strike out words "issue all cards of membership."

9th. The investigating committee shall consider and act upon all charges against members. Such charges shall not be debated upon before the committee has reported.

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3d. The adoption of the committee report *approving the action* of the National Executive Committee in declaring that our party had not and will not have any official connection with military organizations.

4th. The sanction given to the proposition to establish a Daily and Weekly paper in the English language, in New York City, under the control of the New York and Brooklyn sections, and for which they will be responsible. Said paper to be established on or before June 1st, 1880. Appointment of the chief editor to be subject to the approval of the National Executive Committee, publication not to be commenced until the sum of \$6,000 has been secured. No other paper, started by any section or member, to receive party recognition until this one is established, *provided it is started* before June 1st, 1880.

5th. The name of the paper to be "Union."

6th. Sections throughout the country to immediately make preparations for the holding of festivals, fairs, balls, etc., in aid of the proposed English paper.

7th. A Press Association and Central Publishing Agency to be established in Cincinnati as soon as practicable, for the purpose of printing books, pamphlets, tracts, etc., etc., in the interest of our party.

8th. Party papers which may publish attacks upon any party member before his case shall have been acted upon by the Board of Supervision, or the section to which he belongs, shall lose the official recognition of the party.

9th. Our party will enter the Presidential Campaign with candidates of our own.

10th. The sections will vote upon each of the three following nominees:—Caleb Pink and Osborn Ward, of New York, and Orrin A. Bishop of Chicago, Ill., the one receiving the highest number of votes to be our candidate for President, and the one receiving the next highest number, for Vice-President.

11th. Our party will send no delegates to the proposed National Labor Convention at Chicago.

12th. A special convention of the Socialistic Labor Party will be held at Chicago on or before July 4th, 1880, for the purpose of publicly ratifying the nominations to be made by general vote as per Article 10, (see above).

13th. Detroit shall be the seat of the National Executive Committee for the ensuing term.

14th. Philip Van Patten shall be the Party Secretary for the ensuing term.

15th. Chicago will be the seat of the National Board of Supervision for the ensuing term.

7th. The section officers shall report to and receive their instructions from the central committee which represents the section. They shall attend all meetings of the central committee, and perform the duties specified in the Constitution. They are full members of the central committee.

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11th. Our party will send no delegates to the proposed National Labor Convention at Chicago.

12th. A special convention of the Socialistic Labor Party will be held at Chicago on or before July 4th, 1880, for the purpose of publicly ratifying the nominations to be made by general vote as per Article 10, (see above).

13th. Detroit shall be the seat of the National Executive Committee for the ensuing term.

14th. Philip Van Patten shall be the Party Secretary for the ensuing term.

15th. Chicago will be the seat of the National Board of Supervision for the ensuing term.

12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

Budd Clark

1 vote

Walter Smith

1 vote

Ad. Bishop

1 vote

Chairman of the Executive Committee

Section